

Erin Heskett

Erin Heskett, Senior Program Officer of the Wildlife and Habitat Program (WHP) at the International Fund for Animal Welfare (IFAW), is responsible for the research, development, and implementation of WHP's campaign strategies and policies. Specifically, Erin plays a leadership role in developing and advancing IFAW's global whale protection program to address key threats to whales, which include: commercial whaling; industrial development (including anthropogenic noise); fishing gear entanglements; ship strikes; and strandings.

Erin leads two of IFAW's major campaigns including the North Atlantic right whale campaign to address the two greatest threats to this highly endangered species (ship strikes and entanglements); and the ocean noise campaign to address the effects of anthropogenic noise on marine mammals. In March 2003, Erin was appointed to the National Marine Fisheries Service Atlantic Large Whale Take Reduction Team, and was recently invited to join the Stellwagen Bank National Marine Sanctuary Management Plan Review Working Group on Vessel Collisions with Marine Mammals.

Before joining IFAW, Erin served as Remedial Project Manager and Public Affairs Specialist in the Regional Administrator's office of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Region 1 (New England), developing and implementing community involvement and public affairs programs for hazardous waste site cleanups throughout the region, and managing cleanups in Connecticut and Maine.

As a Peace Corps volunteer in Senegal from 1991-1993, Erin worked with villages to develop agroforestry, micro-enterprise, and education projects toward protecting the biosphere reserve, Niokolo-koba National Park.

Erin received his Master of Arts in Environmental Policy from Tufts University in 1996. His thesis, *Protecting the Landscape in the Southern Berkshires Bioreserve: An Institutional Framework for Ecosystem Management*, explored options for multi-stakeholder collaboration toward implementing landscape-scale environmental protection regimes.

International Fund for Animal Welfare

IFAW works to improve the welfare of wild and domestic animals throughout the world by reducing commercial exploitation of animals, protecting wildlife habitats, and assisting animals in distress. IFAW has offices in 13 countries, programs in more than 30 countries; and a global staff of more than 200 experienced campaigners, legal and political experts, and scientists.

IFAW's integrated, international whale team works to protect whales worldwide through noninvasive scientific research, advocacy in international forums that address whale conservation, whale watching initiatives, and public education. IFAW's flagship vessel for non-invasive whale research, *Song of the Whale (SOTW)*, conducts important studies of whales and other cetaceans using acoustic and video observation techniques, provides hands-on assistance rescuing whales entangled in fishing gear, and promotes community efforts to establish whale watching as an alternative to whaling. SOTW's onboard scientists also serve as educational mentors for marine scientists and schoolchildren alike.